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ABSTRACT

Linguistics is the empirical study of language; linguistic philosophy is an approach to understanding the underlying nature of the phenomena that linguists study. The discussion here of linguistic philosophy is designed for linguists, but presupposes no prior acquaintance with either the philosophy of language or linguistic theory. It is concerned with the major theorists of linguistics, semantics, and philosophy of language. The bulk of the text is divided into five sections. The first is concerned with foundational issues such as truth, meaning, and the nature of language. The other four deal with the specific linguistic phenomena that have attracted the most attention: naming (names, sense, and nominarum, and the causal theory of names); definite descriptions (description and analysis, and description as names); nonextensional contexts (modality and propositional attitudes); and generality (indefinite noun phrases, Fregean quantifiers, and class theory). Each section lists further readings. (Contains 71 references.) (MSE)

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